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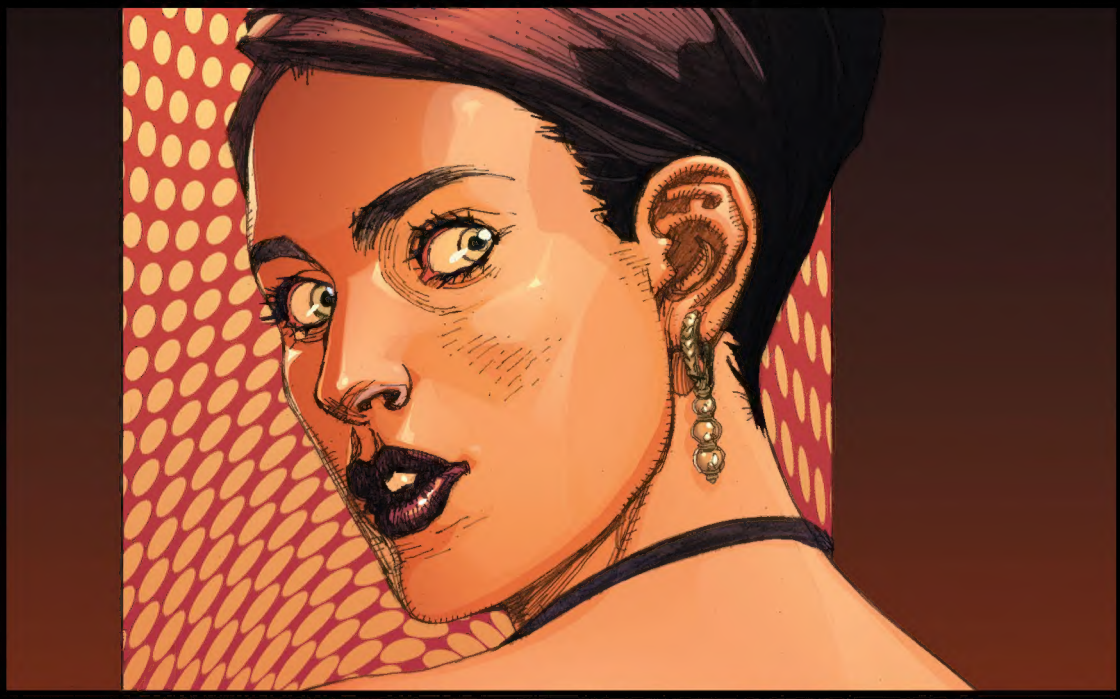
THE NEW AVENGERS

ECHO

PREVIOUSLY...



The New Avengers know that the shape-shifting aliens known as the Skrulls have invaded the Earth. And, since they cannot tell who is really a Skrull, they cannot trust anyone to be who they seem to be, including each other. This has sent the Avengers into a tailspin of mistrust.

Maya Lopez, the deaf woman raised by the Kingpin with the ability to emulate any opponent's fighting style, has recently reinvented her life by becoming a New Avenger…

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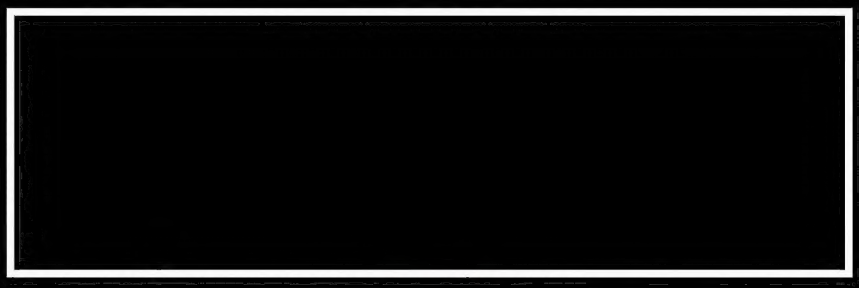
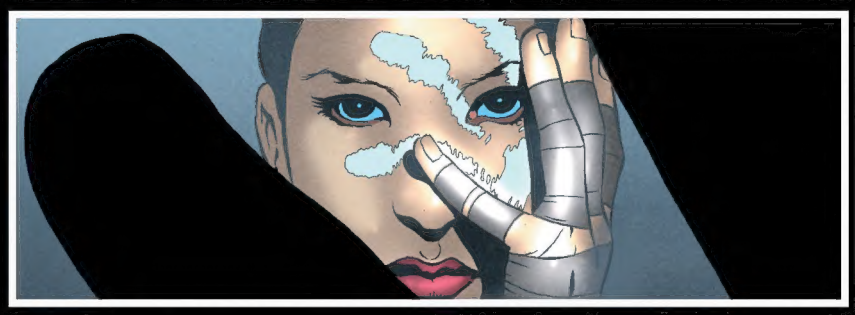
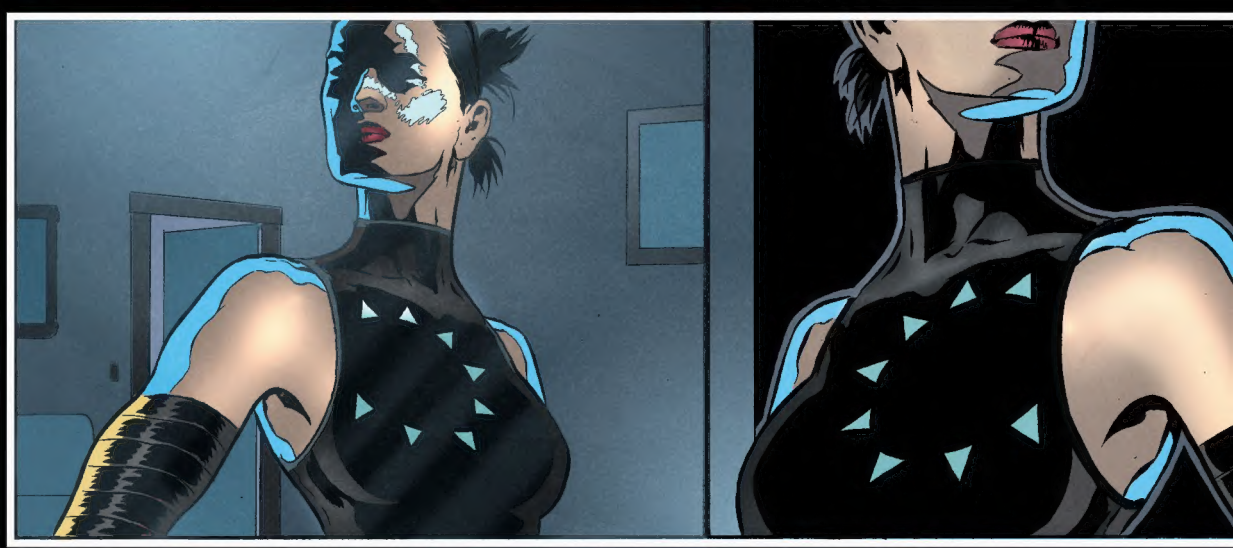
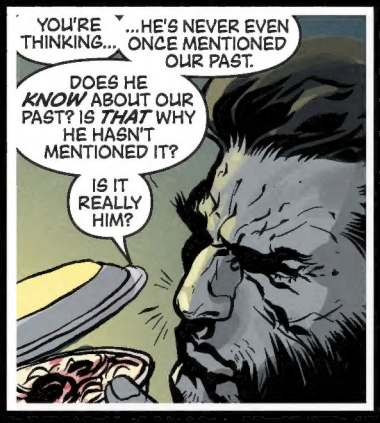


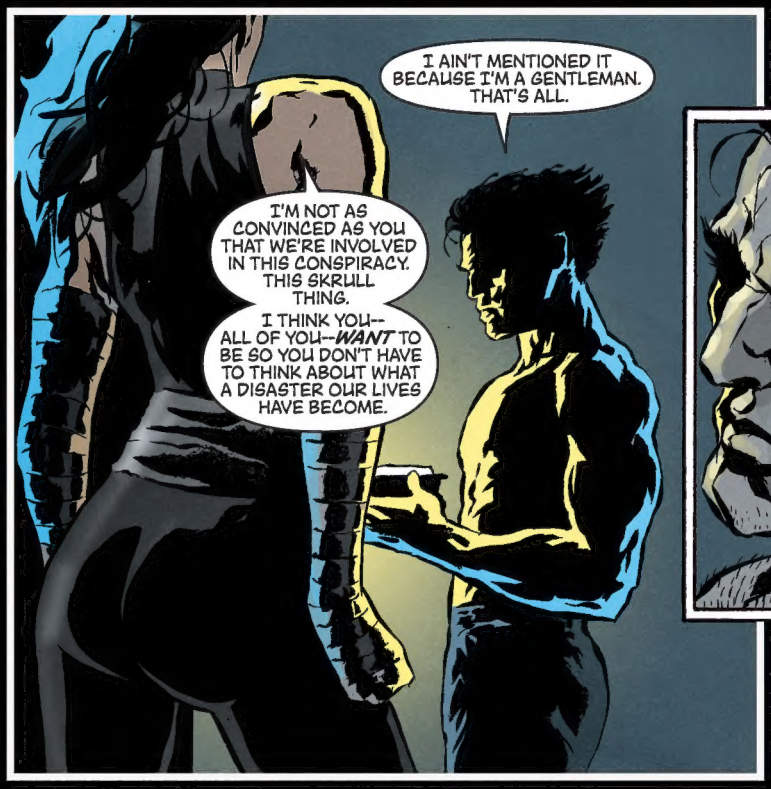




I AIN'T A SKRULL, MAYA.

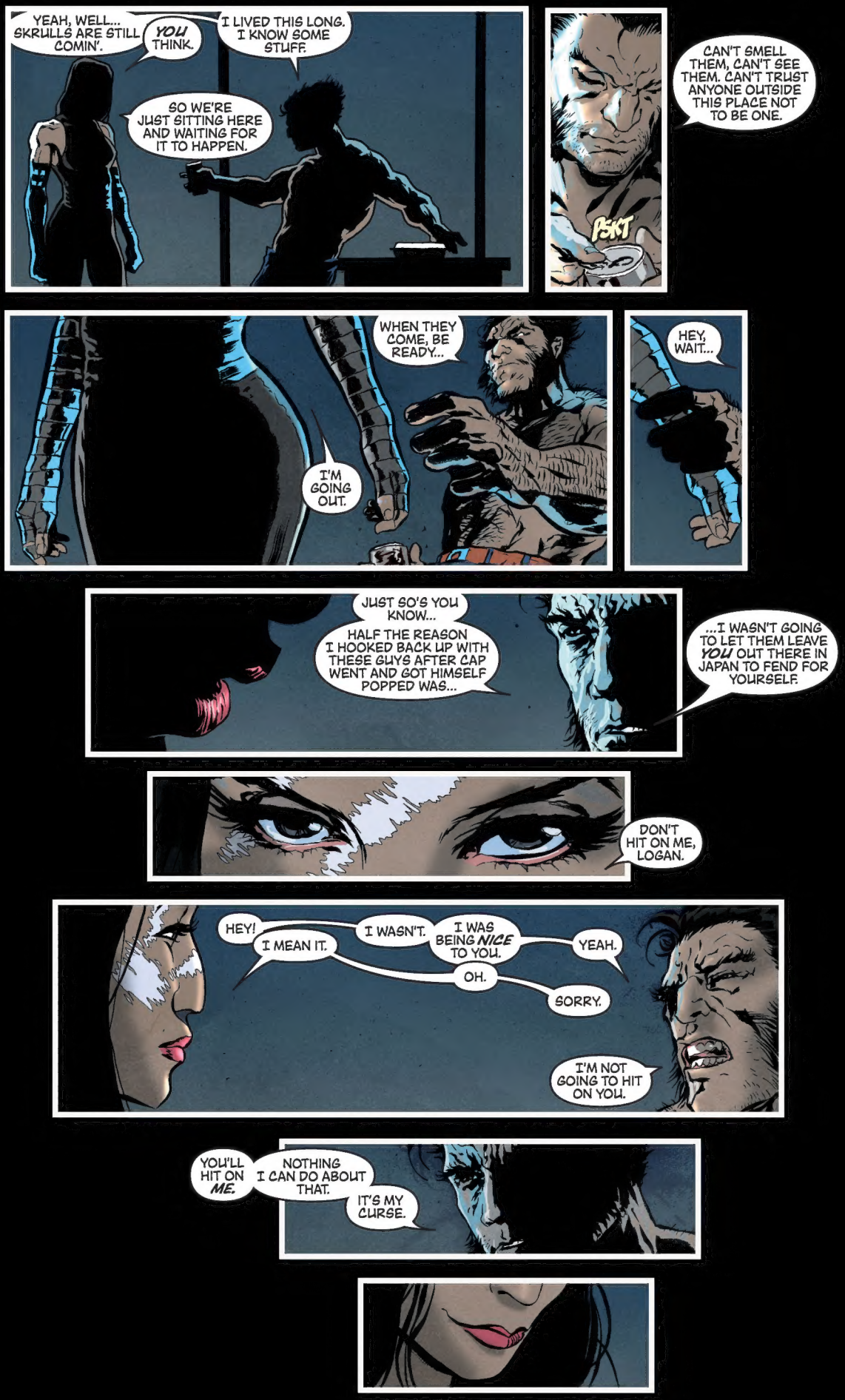
I DIDN'T SAY YOU WERE.


YOU'RE THINKING...
...HE'S NEVER EVEN ONCE MENTIONED OUR PAST.
DOES HE *KNOW* ABOUT OUR PAST? IS *THAT* WHY HE HASN'T MENTIONED IT?
IS IT REALLY HIM?


I AIN'T MENTIONED IT BECAUSE I'M A GENTLEMAN. THAT'S ALL.
I'M NOT AS CONVINCED AS YOU THAT WE'RE INVOLVED IN THIS CONSPIRACY. THIS SKRULL THING.
I THINK YOU--ALL OF YOU--*WANT* TO BE SO YOU DON'T HAVE TO THINK ABOUT WHAT A DISASTER OUR LIVES HAVE BECOME.

UH... NOPE.
MY LIFE'S ABOUT THE SAME LEVEL OF DISASTER IT *ALWAYS* WAS.

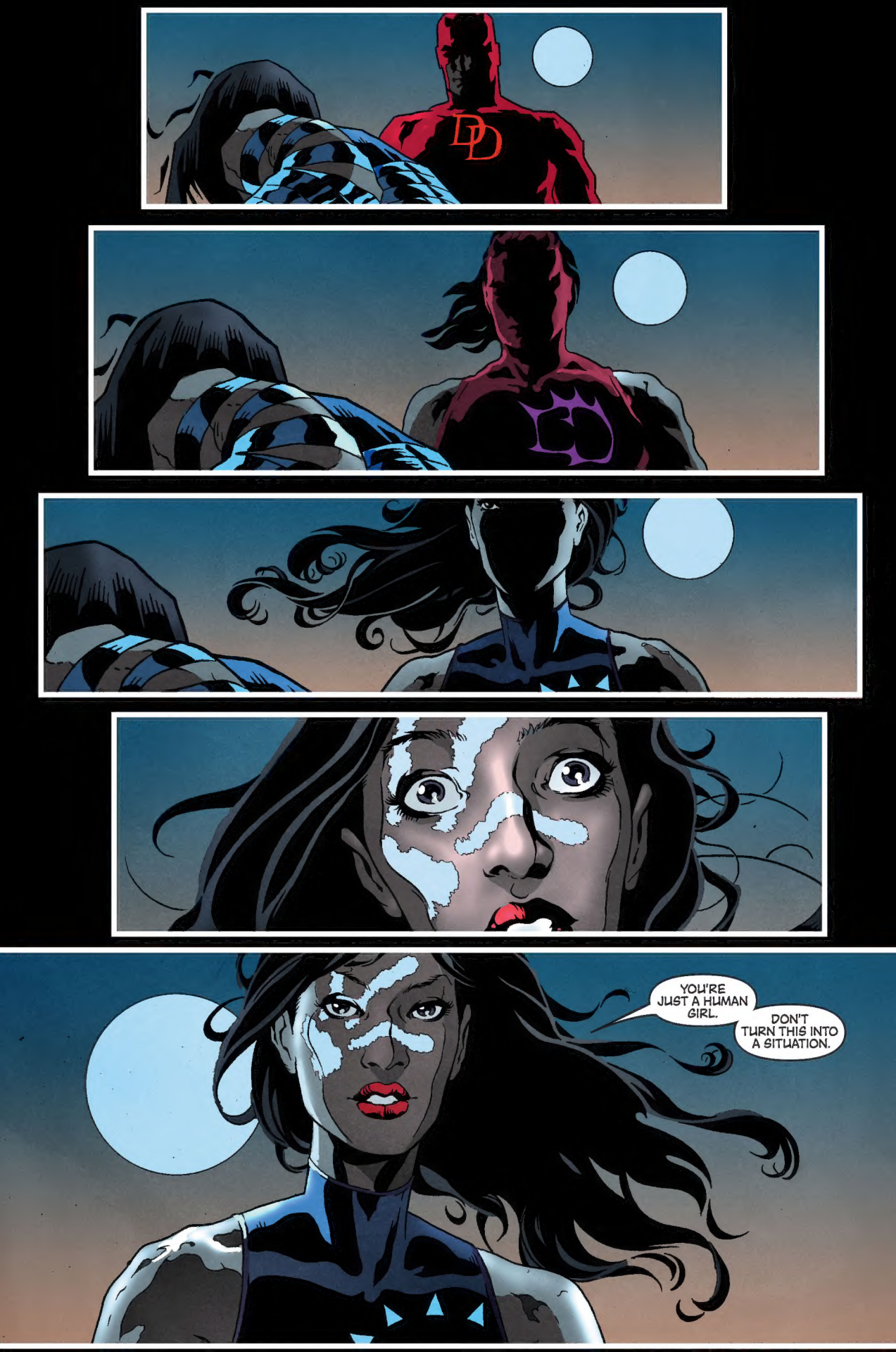
CAPTAIN AMERICA IS DEAD.
AND WE'RE HIDING.


YEAH, WELL... SKRULLS ARE STILL COMIN'.
YOU THINK.
I LIVED THIS LONG. I KNOW SOME STUFF.
SO WE'RE JUST SITTING HERE AND WAITING FOR IT TO HAPPEN.
PSKT
CAN'T SMELL THEM, CAN'T SEE THEM. CAN'T TRUST ANYONE OUTSIDE THIS PLACE NOT TO BE ONE.
WHEN THEY COME, BE READY...
I'M GOING OUT.
HEY, WAIT...
JUST SO'S YOU KNOW... HALF THE REASON I HOOKED BACK UP WITH THESE GUYS AFTER CAP WENT AND GOT HIMSELF POPPED WAS...
...I WASN'T GOING TO LET THEM LEAVE YOU OUT THERE IN JAPAN TO FEND FOR YOURSELF.
DON'T HIT ON ME, LOGAN.
HEY!
I MEAN IT.
I WASN'T.
I WAS BEING NICE TO YOU.
YEAH.
OH.
SORRY.
I'M NOT GOING TO HIT ON YOU.
YOU'LL HIT ON ME.
NOTHING I CAN DO ABOUT THAT.
IT'S MY CURSE.

NELSON
MURDOC
& BLAKI
ATTORNEYS
AT LAW

HI, MAYA.
MATT MURDOCK! I WASN'T SURE YOU WERE BACK IN AMERICA.
WHERE'VE *YOU* BEEN HIDING?
ON A ROAD YOU *PUT* ME ON.
YOU'RE STILL WITH LUKE CAGE AND THE OTHERS?
YES, I AM.
STILL?
YES. STILL.
YOU'RE-- YOU'RE LIKE THIS WHOLE REBEL SUPER HERO PERSON NOW.
YOU'RE AN AVENGER.
I'M *WITH* THEM. DON'T KNOW IF IT MAKES ME *ONE* OF THEM.
YET.
WERE YOU COMING AROUND LOOKING FOR ME?
I HAD TO--
I NEED TO KNOW...
WHY DID YOU SEND CAPTAIN AMERICA TO ME?

CAPTAIN AMERICA'S DEAD.
YES.
I-I MEAN...
OH! OH!
YOU MEAN BEFORE.
YEAH.
IT WAS THE RIGHT THING TO DO.
IT WORKED OUT, RIGHT? LOOK AT YOU.
RIGHT?
AND WHO ARE YOU REALLY?


YOU'RE JUST A HUMAN GIRL.
DON'T TURN THIS INTO A SITUATION.

WELL, I DID WARN YOU.
FROOM
AGH!

AGH!
CLANG
I'VE SPENT SO MUCH TIME STUDYING YOU.
PLEASE, I DON'T WANT TO HURT YOU ANY MORE THAN IS NECESSARY.
JUST LET WHAT NEEDS TO HAPPEN HAPPEN.
PISSH
@#$!
COME ON!
HAA!!
SLICE
MAYA, AGH!
THIS-- THIS IS NOT A FIGHT YOU CAN WIN.
WHAT DO YOU WANT?

AGH!

I'VE STUDIED YOU. I *DO* RESPECT YOU.

YOU'VE PULLED YOURSELF TOGETHER FROM NOTHING AND I *ADMIRE* THAT.

SURRENDER AND LET THIS BE DONE.

I REALLY *DO* ADMIRE YOU.

REALLY?

THEN YOU'LL GET A KICK OUT OF THIS.

SLICE
AAGSH!

AHH!
TUMP
NO.

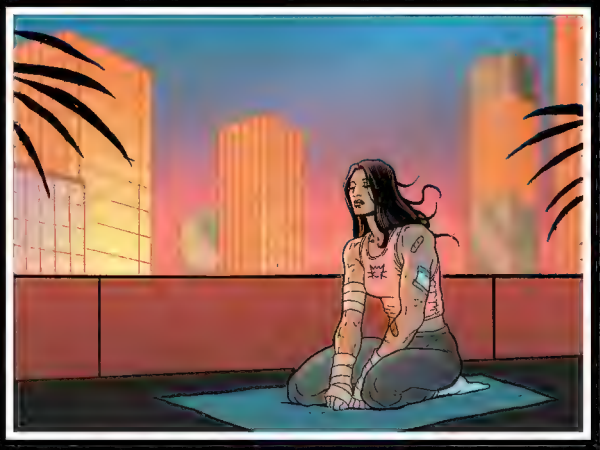
HHUURRGGHH!
NO!
YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT YOU'RE FIGHTING FOR! YOU DON'T KNOW--
AGH!
WE'RE TRAINED TO DIE.
BAMF

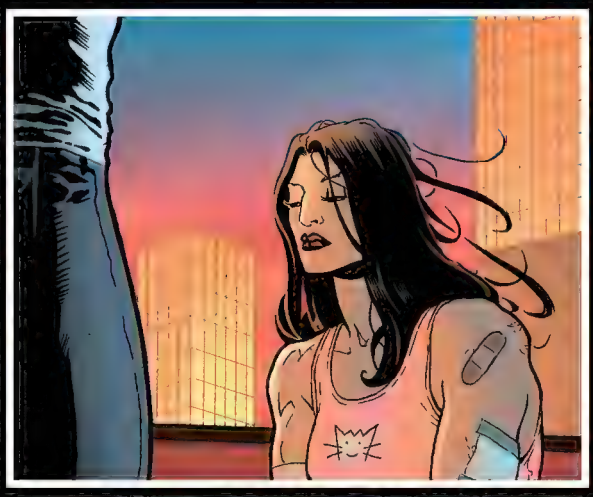
EYES OPEN!
IT 'PORTED!
(SHE CAN'T HEAR ME...)
BAMF

HAAII!
PAK
CRACK
OOF!
NAAGH!
NGUUKK...
NO!
BAMF

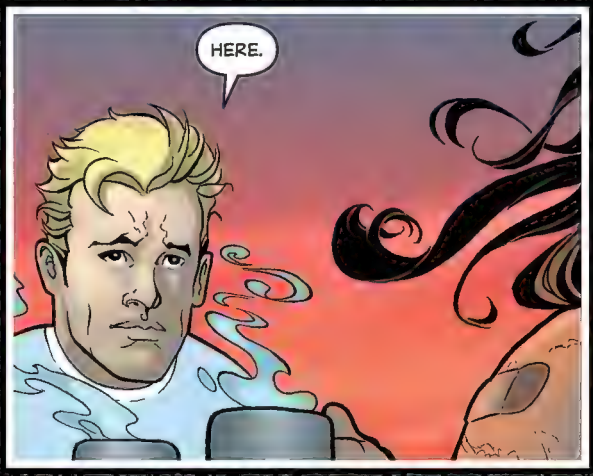
BAMF
NNN...
@#$$.
CYCLOPS EYE-BLAST, NIGHTCRAWLER 'PORTING, TORCH POWERS...
(OR FIRESTAR POWERS...)
YUP.
IT WANTED ME.
DAMN 'PORTERS. CAN'T TRACK 'EM FOR @#$%.

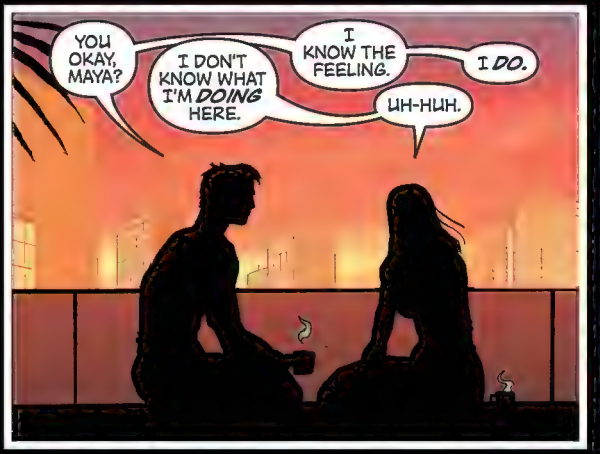
NOW AGH! DO YOU BELIEVE ME? TOLD YA THE SKRULLS ARE--
OH! I GOT YOU.
GIVE ME A MINUTE.
I GOT YOU.
YOU WERE FOLLOWING ME?
YES I WAS. LUCKY FOR YOU.
WHY? 'CAUSE IF I OW! IF I WAS A SKRULL LOOKING TO SINK THEIR CLAWS INTO OUR LITTLE TEAM, YOU'D BE THE ONE I'D GO AFTER.
YOU'RE THE ONE WITH THE LEAST AMOUNT A' TIES. THE LEAST HISTORY.
YOU'RE THE ONE I'D GRAB.
THEY WERE GOING TO KILL ME AND REPLACE ME.
YEAH, THEY WERE GOING TO SWITCH YOU OUT.
I WAS RIGHT, YOU WERE WRONG. AND YOU'RE WELCOME.

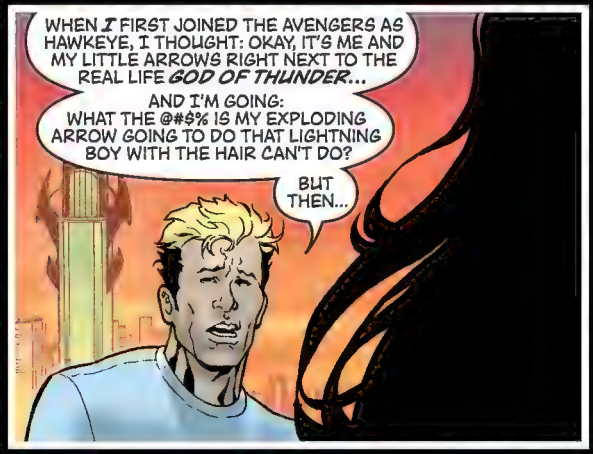


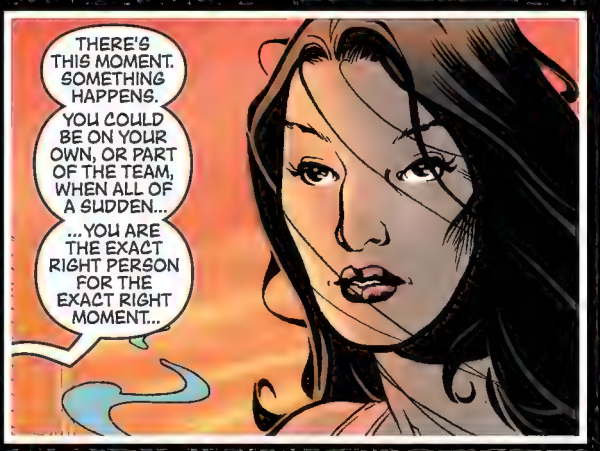


NOT EVERY DAY YOU GET TO BEAT THE CRAP OUT OF YOURSELF.
I GUESS SKRULLS ARE GOOD FOR *SOMETHING.*

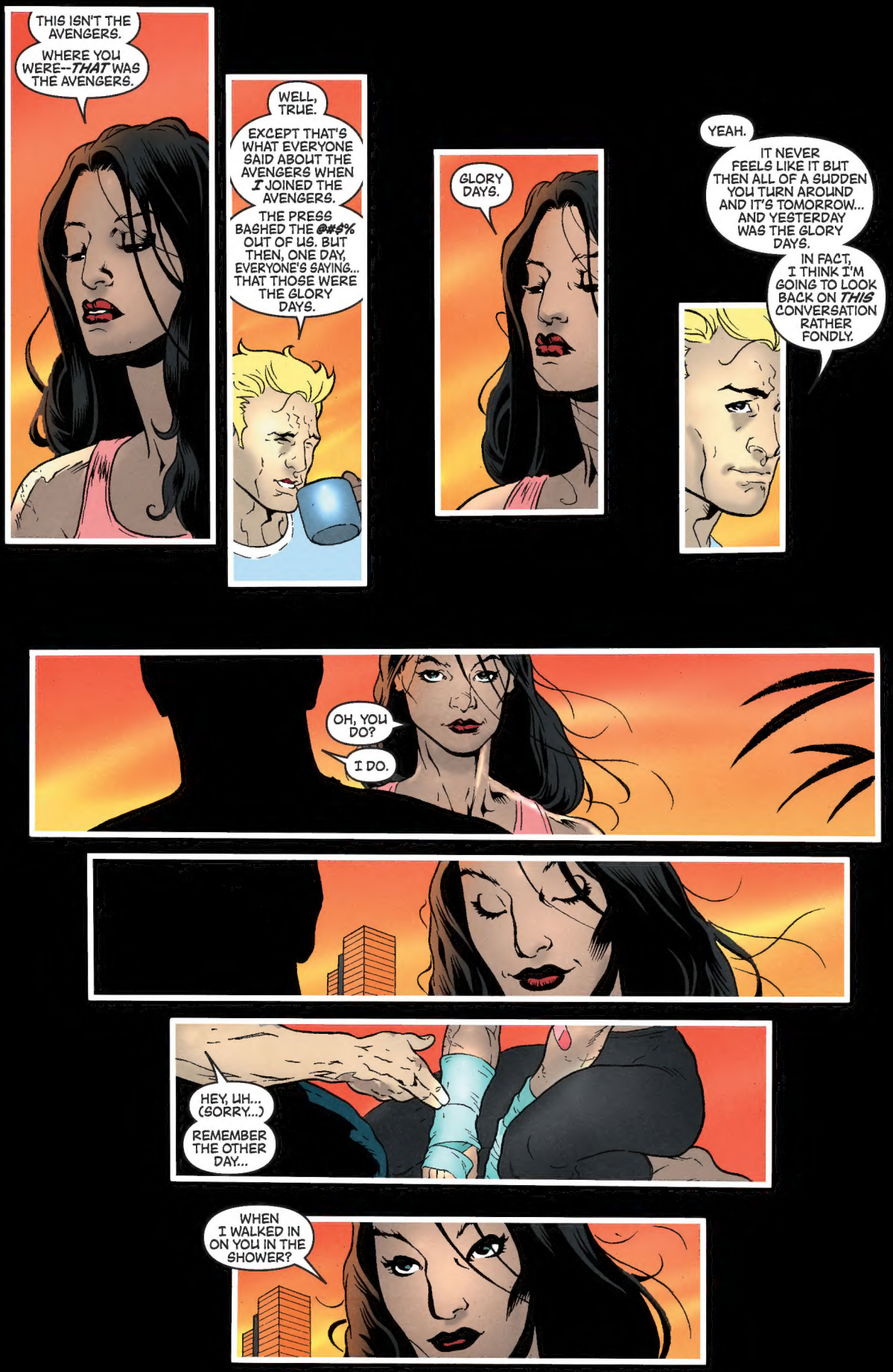

HERE.

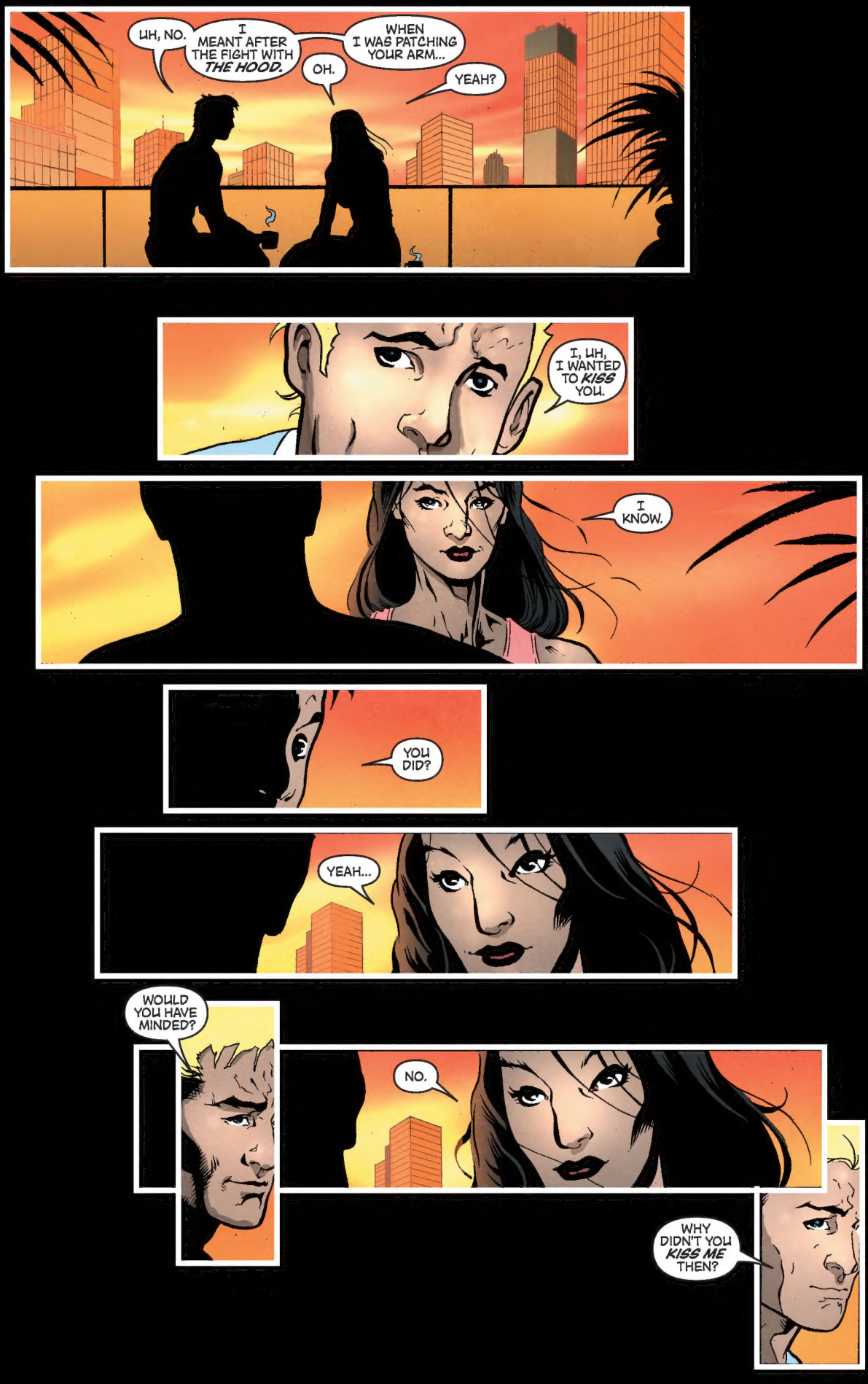

YOU OKAY, MAYA?
I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'M *DOING* HERE.
I KNOW THE FEELING.
I *DO.*
UH-HUH.


WHEN *I* FIRST JOINED THE AVENGERS AS HAWKEYE, I THOUGHT: OKAY, IT'S ME AND MY LITTLE ARROWS RIGHT NEXT TO THE REAL LIFE *GOD OF THUNDER*...
AND I'M GOING: WHAT THE @#$% IS MY EXPLODING ARROW GOING TO DO THAT LIGHTNING BOY WITH THE HAIR CAN'T DO?
BUT THEN...

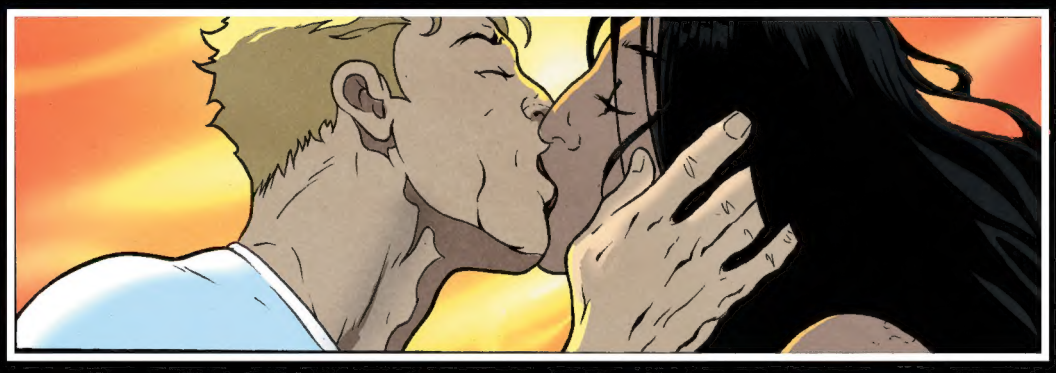

THERE'S THIS MOMENT. SOMETHING HAPPENS.
YOU COULD BE ON YOUR OWN, OR PART OF THE TEAM, WHEN ALL OF A SUDDEN...
...YOU ARE THE EXACT RIGHT PERSON FOR THE EXACT RIGHT MOMENT...

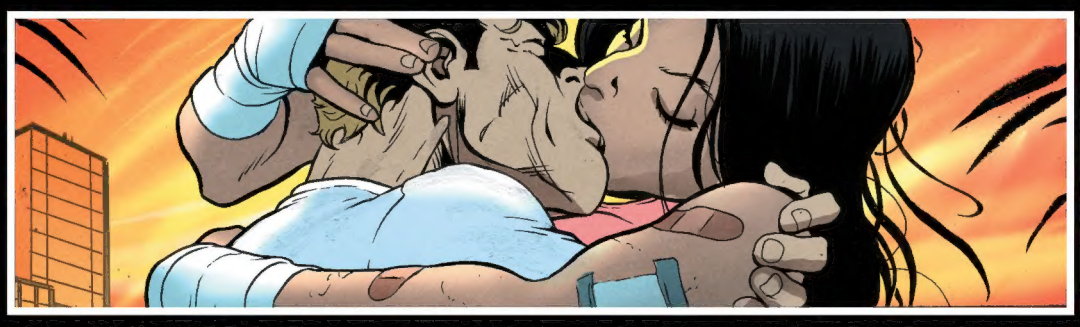
...AND YOU TAKE YOUR SHOT.
AND ALL OF A SUDDEN YOU KNOW. YOU'RE AN AVENGER. AND THAT'S...
LET'S BE HONEST...

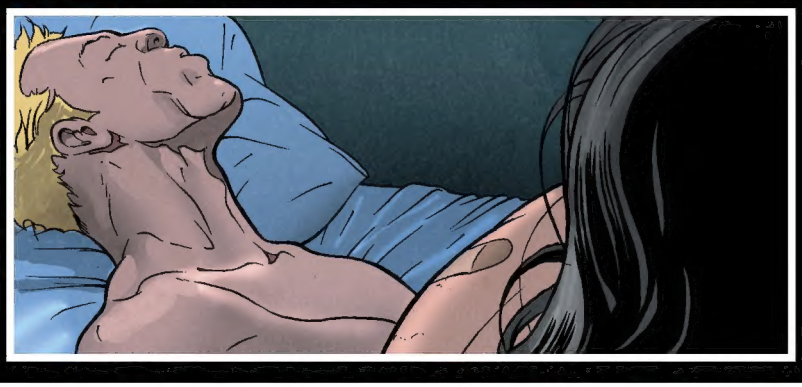

THIS ISN'T THE AVENGERS.
WHERE YOU WERE--THAT WAS THE AVENGERS.
WELL, TRUE.
EXCEPT THAT'S WHAT EVERYONE SAID ABOUT THE AVENGERS WHEN I JOINED THE AVENGERS.
THE PRESS BASHED THE @#$% OUT OF US. BUT THEN, ONE DAY, EVERYONE'S SAYING... THAT THOSE WERE THE GLORY DAYS.
GLORY DAYS.
YEAH.
IT NEVER FEELS LIKE IT BUT THEN ALL OF A SUDDEN YOU TURN AROUND AND IT'S TOMORROW... AND YESTERDAY WAS THE GLORY DAYS.
IN FACT, I THINK I'M GOING TO LOOK BACK ON THIS CONVERSATION RATHER FONDLY.
OH, YOU DO?
I DO.
HEY, UH... (SORRY...)
REMEMBER THE OTHER DAY...
WHEN I WALKED IN ON YOU IN THE SHOWER?

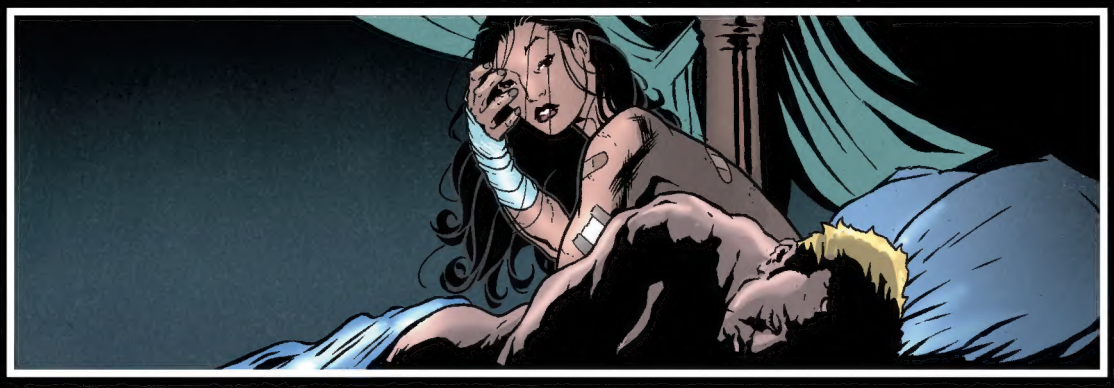

UH, NO.
I MEANT AFTER THE FIGHT WITH THE HOOD.
OH.
WHEN I WAS PATCHING YOUR ARM...
YEAH?
I, UH, I WANTED TO KISS YOU.
I KNOW.
YOU DID?
YEAH...
WOULD YOU HAVE MINDED?
NO.
WHY DIDN'T YOU KISS ME THEN?

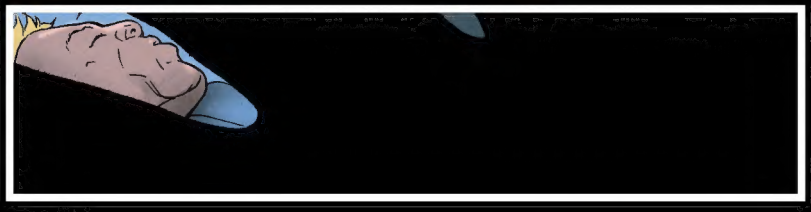
CHICKEN OUT!
HEY, IF YOU'RE GOING TO CHICKEN OUT...
I WAS RIGHT THERE. YOU CHICKENED OUT.











NEXT ISSUE: SKRULLS!